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Apropos of a ‘Recognition’ (Catullus, C. 101, 1)*

ABSTRACT. In *Poem* 101 Catullus narrates his journey to the Troad to perform the last rites at his brother’s tomb. In the first line (*multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus*) I recognize an allusion to *Iliad* 24,8 (ἀνδρῶν τε πολέμους ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων). The poet readapts and uses the Homeric hexameter as a ‘motto’ to recall one of the most famous books of the *Iliad*. In it we are told of two episodes which took place precisely in the Troad and are very similar to the experience Catullus describes in his elegy: Achilles’ lament for the dead Patroclus and the celebration of Hector’s funeral. Thus, by means of the allusion to *Iliad* 24,8 the Latin poet succeeds in evoking the potent archetypal images of the Homeric epic and equating his brother with Patroclus and Hector. Not by chance, the association of his brother’s fate with that of the Iliadic heroes who perished in the common grave of Troy occurs also in *Poem* 65 (ll. 5 ff.) and especially in *Poem* 68 (ll. 19 ff and 89 ff.). But the decisive confirmation of Catullus’ allusion to *Iliad* 24,8 is given by Virgil. In Book 6 of the *Aeneid* he imitates *Poem* 101,1 in l. 692 (*quas ego te terras et quanta per aequora vectum*) and some lines afterward, in l. 699 (*sic memorans largo fletu simul ora rigabat*), he translates *Iliad* 24,9 (τῶν μμνησκόμενος θαλερὸν κατὰ δάκρυα εἶβεν), establishing a very learned literary contest with Catullus, thus making clear that he understood his allusion.

Multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus
advenio has miseras, frater, ad inferias,
ut te postremo donarem munere mortis
et mutam nequiquam adloquerer cinerem,
quandoquidem fortuna mihi tete abstulit ipsum, 5
heu miser indigne frater adempte mihi.
Nunc tamen interea haec, prisco quae more parentum
tradita sunt tristi munere ad inferias,
accipe fraterno multum manantia fletu
atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale. 10

The publication in 1971 of Gian Biagio Conte’s paper «Poetic Memory and the Art of Allusion (On a verse of Catullus and one of Virgil)»¹ marked a turning point toward a deeper appreciation of poem 101 of Catullus’ *liber*. According to the scholar, the first line *multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus* may contain an allusion to the proem of Homer’s *Odyssey*²:

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¹ In *Strumenti Critici* 16 (1971), 325-333 (reprinted in *Memoria dei poeti e sistema letterario. Catullo Virgilio Ovidio Lucano*, Torino 1985² [1974], 5-14). I quote from the English translation in Julia Haig Gaisser’s *Catullus* («Oxford Readings in Classical Studies»), Oxford 2007, 167-176.

² Cf. Conte, op. cit. (n. 1), 168 f.

ὅς μάλα πολλὰ
πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·
πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω,
πολλὰ δ' ὃ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν.

The 'many people' and 'many seas' of the Latin line may be borrowed from *Odyssey* 1.3 f. and guarantee the link between the two passages. Catullus – who made a journey to the Troad to visit the tomb of his brother – may reevoke in the reader's mind, by means of this allusion, the image of the most famous traveller of the Antiquity, Odysseus, who fought at Troy³.

In order to confirm the effectiveness of this allusion, Conte⁴ calls upon an ancient 'reader' of Homer and Catullus: Virgil. In Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, Anchises welcomes his son Aeneas to the Kingdom of the Dead with these words (v. 692 f.):

*Quas ego te terras et quanta per aequora vectum
accipio! quantis iactatum, nate, periclis!*

In the first of the two verses it is easy to recognize the line *multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus*. It is indeed quite probable that Virgil remembered poem 101 and even more plausible that he remembered it in this passage of Book 6⁵, where the situation is so similar: Catullus had travelled 'through many people and many seas' to reach the tomb of his brother; in the same way, the *profugus* Aeneas joins a dead relative. Virgil borrows Catullus' line but has it said by the late Anchises, who welcomes his son ascertaining the long duration and the dangers of his wanderings, and not by the living Aeneas, who has just arrived: the variation is well contrived, the result delightful. The plausibility of this allusion is confirmed by the identity of the rythmical structures of the two verses, which because of the similarity of the contexts cannot be due to chance. Furthermore, it is clear that the epic poet fuses Catullus' line with the opening of the *Odyssey*, which was already remodelled in the proem of the *Aeneid* itself: to the 'many people' and 'many seas' of Catullus Virgil adds the 'being buffeted about', the *πολλὰ πλάγχθη* of *Odyssey* 1.1 f., which in *Aeneid* 1.3 appears as *multum ... iactatus*. He creates, thus, a couple of lines with an Odyssean tone, which are clearly linked to the opening lines of his own poem and with those of the *Odyssey* and the operation is accomplished by reusing line 1 of poem 101: so, according to Conte, Virgil «made the most» of the «extra power» Catullus «offered all his readers»⁶.

The scholar made this reconstruction more convincing by emphasizing that the Odyssean passage used by Catullus is at the very beginning of the poem, in the same way as the Catullan passage used by Virgil is the first line of the elegy: and, as is common knowledge,

³ «Catullus thus gives his line a hidden reserve of literary energy whose full potential is released when the two texts are brought together» (op. cit. [n. 1], 169).

⁴ Op. cit. (n. 1), 169 ff.

⁵ New convincing evidence has been given by Conte himself and A. Barchiesi in «Imitazione e arte allusiva», in *Lo spazio letterario di Roma antica*, I, Roma 1979, 81-114 (esp. 108 ff.).

⁶ Op. cit. (n. 1), 169.

the opening lines have «a high degree of memorability [...] thanks to the prominence given by the initial position», so that we could speak of a «rhythmical-compositional recall oriented [...] towards the openings of other poems»⁷.

Conte's analysis here summarized soon gained a wide consensus and Catullus' poem has been included among the poetic Latin pieces in which the technique of the 'art of allusion' seems to be acting⁸. The central idea of his 'recognition' is indeed fully convincing: no one would disagree that in the line *multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus* an Odyssean atmosphere can be perceived. Nonetheless, some doubts have been raised over it, and scholars have been encouraged to look for other more compelling allusions.

Although keeping the main idea of Conte's reconstruction, Giuseppe Gilberto Biondi⁹ felt that Catullus wanted to make an allusion not to the whole νόστος of Odysseus, but to the specific moment of the Νέκυσια¹⁰. Thus the poet is not recalling the opening of the *Odyssey* to evoke the myth of the νόστος in the reader's mind; he is rather recalling the whole *Odyssey*, by means of the citation of his opening, to evoke the Νέκυσια, because of the similarity of the contexts of Book 11 and Catullus' elegy. It is clear that the scholar diverges from the linear technique of allusion investigated by Conte. But one would agree that a generic recall of Odysseus the wanderer may have no efficacy in the context of poem 101: here the focus is on the moment of the meeting with the dead brother and an allusion aimed at emphasizing the difficulties of the long voyage – almost as perilous as the Odyssean one – could ruin the pathos. Moreover, Odysseus cannot fully be considered a suitable model for Catullus¹¹: the

⁷ Conte, op. cit. (n. 1), 172 f.

⁸ The definition 'art of allusion' goes back to the renowned essay of Giorgio Pasquali, «Arte allusiva», now in *Pagine stravaganti*, II, Firenze 1994, 275-282. A well documented introduction and overview of the topic can be found in A. Cavarzere, *Sul limitare. Il «motto» e la poesia di Orazio*, Bologna 1996, 9 ff.

⁹ «Il carme 101 di Catullo», *Lingua e stile* 11 (1976), 409-425. I quote from the English translation in Gaisser, op. cit. (n. 1), 177-197.

¹⁰ Biondi, op. cit. (n. 9), 188: «That this very episode enters the literary horizon of poem 101 and influences it according to the dynamics of the art of allusion seems quite probable to me. Both in the Homeric episode and in Catullus' poem three points succeed each other: the journey, the ritual, the brief encounter. Odysseus reaches the underworld only after a long journey and only after performing the sacrifices; his mother's first words emphasize precisely the length and difficulty of the journey [...] Catullus repeats the basic elements of the Homeric episode in a stylized form, except for the meeting between kin, whose very absence is the distinguishing feature of his composition. I am therefore inclined to say that the watermark, so to speak, of v. 1 and the whole poem is not Odysseus' journey in general, but a particular point within it: the journey to the kingdom of the dead. The proof is afforded by Virgil in the underworld encounter of Aeneas and Anchises, in which he picks up the very first line of Catullus' poem [...] Virgil had therefore understood to what point of Odysseus' long journey Catullus was alluding.»

¹¹ This has recently been noticed by J. Godwin, *Catullus: the Shorter Poems*, Warminster 1999, 212 f., who however does not abandon Conte's recognition and saves it by suggesting that the Odysseus' model is alluded to with an ironic intention! Some years before J.E.G. Zetzel, «Catullus, Ennius and the Poetics of Allusion», *Illinois Classical Studies* 8 (1983), 251-266 (I quote from the English translation in Gaisser, op. cit. (n. 1), 198-

former goes back from Troy to find family affection in his land once again; the latter travels from his land towards Troy to realize that the love of his dearest relative is lost forever (*et mutam nequiquam adloquerer cinerem*).

A different suggestion has been given more recently by Luciano Landolfi¹². Emphasizing the great difference between the structures of the Catullan hexameter and the first lines of the *Odyssey*, the scholar realized that an exhaustive appreciation of the Catullan allusion could be obtained only with the aid of another three Odyssean passages¹³ and even one of the *Argonautica* by Apollonius Rhodius¹⁴. In this case too, Landolfi's reconstruction diverges markedly – and dangerously I may add – from Conte's, whose argumentation was plain and 'recognition' striking. But that it is not easy to compare, from a metrical, syntactical and semantic point of view, Catullus' line with the opening of the *Odyssey* was implicitly implied by Conte himself, who could not escape the admission that only the «essential features» of the Homeric passage appear in Catullus: the hexameter *multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus* should indeed come out of the combination of the *hemiepes* πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων with a readaptation of πολλὰ ... ἐν πόντῳ and with an «appreciable variation» of the opening πλάγχθη in *vectus* at the end of the verse¹⁵.

In what follows, I would like to reassess Conte's suggestion, as I feel that I have recognized an 'Odyssean' passage alluded to by Catullus which can satisfactorily complete and clarify the picture of his reuse of the Homeric model. We immediately notice that the rhythm and the structure of the verse

216), discussing Conte's suggestion, had already admitted that Catullus «portrays his eastern voyage as a backward *Odyssey*, an *anti-nostos*» (202).

¹² «*Multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus* (Cat. c. CI 1). Catullo fra Omero ed Apollonio Rodio», *Emerita* 64 (1996), 255-260. I point out here three other important papers that only occasionally deal with the topic discussed here: Th. Gelzer, «Bemerkungen zu Catull c. 101», *Museum Helveticum* 49 (1992), 26-32; A. Feldherr, «*Non inter nota sepulcra*: Catullus 101 and Roman Funerary Ritual», *Classical Antiquity* 19 (2000), 209-231 (reprinted in Gaisser, *op. cit.*, 399-426); F. Bellandi, «*AD INFERIAS*. Il c. 101 di Catullo fra Meleagro e Foscolo», *Materiali e Discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici* 51 (2003), 65-134 (reprinted in *Lepos e pathos. Studi su Catullo*, Bologna 2007, 271-341).

¹³ *Odyssey* 4.81 f.; 15.176 f. and 400 f.: these passages may account for the 'attenuation' of πλάγχθη in *vectus* implied by Conte's reconstruction.

¹⁴ *Argonautica* 3.348 f.: τεὸν ἄστν μετήλυθη, πόλλ' ἐπαληθεῖς | ἄστεα καὶ πελάγη στνγερεῖς ἄλός. Landolfi recognizes these parallels with Catullus' line: πόλλ' ἐπαληθεῖς ... πελάγη ~ *multa per aequora*; ἄστεα ~ *gentes*; ἐπαληθεῖς ~ *vectus*. He concludes (260): «L'Ομηρικώτατος fra i poeti ellenistici parrebbe quindi aver influenzato Catullo nella selezione di stilemi atti a richiamare incipitariamente Omero e, insieme, a prenderne le distanze».

¹⁵ Conte, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 169.

Multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus

clearly remind us of a Homeric hexameter, one of those formulaic lines with which one becomes acquainted while reading the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*:

ἀνδρῶν τε πολέμους ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων.

This line coherently refers to Odysseus three times in the *Odyssey*. The agreement of the rhythm and the ideas of the two lines can easily be demonstrated. Both hexameters have the same pause at the penthemimeral caesura; the same sequence ‘men’-‘seas’; an identical position of the two *per* and the two τε; a marked correspondence at the verse end between the two participles *vectus* and πείρων; an accurate translation, from a semantic and phonetic point of view, of πείρων with *vehor per*¹⁶. One could straightaway be convinced that this Homeric hexameter represents at least the formal model of the Catullans.

But we can go a step further. The same hexameter appears in the *Iliad* too, in the last book (24.8), and this time refers not to Odysseus but to Achilles: a fact which should not surprise us, since it has been long recognized that a group of Iliadic books should be considered ‘Odyssean’, that is, composed at the same time and according to the style and the diction of the ‘minor’ poem¹⁷. Now, it is not difficult to note that precisely the content of Book 24 of the *Iliad* is very similar to the experience undergone by Catullus and described in poem 101. The Iliadic book begins indeed with the tragic image of Achilles surrendering to despair and crying for his beloved Patroclus on the shores of the Troad: one notices that it is exactly the same place where Catullus bewails his brother. Moreover, in the main part of this book we are told that Priam went to the tent of Achilles to ask for the body of his son Hector and then that he honours him with funeral rites: once again, we are in the Troad and precisely in this place Catullus comes to pay funeral homage to his dead brother.

It seems quite plausible, therefore, that we have found the very Homeric passage Catullus alluded to and that we can now definitely grasp the meaning of his allusion. The Latin poet ‘cites’ the formulaic line *Iliad* 24.8 to recall the dramatic episode of the last book of the *Iliad* in the reader’s mind. Thus, while paying homage to his brother, he can identify his act with the way in which Priam acted towards Hector in the book that ends up with the ceremonious funeral of the hero; he can also identify himself with Achilles (since line 8 refers to him) and hence his brother with Patroclus. The poet wanted the reader to perceive the great love he felt for his dead brother and could obtain that only by invoking the myth told by the greatest of poets: he loved his brother as Achilles loved Patroclus and Priam loved Hector! The allusion

¹⁶ We can note that the Latin verb has not a passive sense, but means simply ‘to travel’ (Cf. *OLD*, s.v. *Vehor* 5). Since πείρω in the Homeric passage seems to have the more specific sense of ‘passing through (while travelling)’ (cf. e.g. Autenrieth-Kaegi, *Wörterbuch zu den homerischen Gedichten*, Leipzig 1920¹³, s.v.), the two *per* intervene to make the correspondence with *vehor* even more precise, as they help to reproduce the exact meaning and above all the sound of πείρω.

¹⁷ In particular the Odyssean character of Book 24 is almost generally recognized by modern scholars: cf., above all, N. Richardson, *The Iliad: a Commentary*, VI, Cambridge 1993, 21 ff.

If my suggestion seems feasible, it can gain more credibility once we notice that Catullus himself appears to point out this allusion to the *Iliad* to the reader. He does so not in poem 101, where everything is epigrammatically expressed, but in two *carmina docta*, 65 and 68, which were composed in the same period¹⁸. In poem 65 the poet declares his incapacity to go on in his literary activity, because the misfortune afflicts his soul (vv. 5 ff.):

The water of Lethe has been lapping on the foot of the dead brother for a short time; the Troian soil is his grave. Similarly Catullus expresses himself in poem 68, in lines 19 ff. and again in lines 89 ff., which need to be quoted:

Troy, which bears the ashes of the valiant heroes both of Europe and Asia, caused the death of the brother of the poet too. And it is this very reference in poem 68 that assures us that Catullus had the *Iliad* in mind, when he thought about the tomb of his brother in the Troad. This leads us to the recognition of the allusion concealed in poem 101. In turn, the allusion to line 8 calls Book 24 to mind and specifies that generic reference to the *Iliad*. Indeed, if we ask ourselves who these heroes of Europe and Asia, who were fated to come to the same mournful end in Troy, are, it is clear that they are the Iliadic heroes, the Greeks and Trojans: this is clearly expressed in poem 68, since the invective against *Troia obscena* (ll. 89-100) is suggested to Catullus precisely by the memory of the sad destiny reserved to Protesilaus in the war over Helen¹⁹. Moreover, if we ask who the most representative heroes lying in the

¹⁹ While looking for a reason for the allusion to the *Odyssey*, Conte (*op. cit.*, 174 n. 15) thought it could be found in Catullus' desire to present his brother as a hero and cited poem 68 in support of this idea. Yet this poem refers precisely to the heroes who died at Troy (as assured by the case of Protesilaus), not to those of the Odyssean νόστοι and particularly to Odysseus, whom poem 101.1 may evoke by means of the allusion to *Odyssey* 1.1 ff.

‘shared tomb’ of Troy are, we should answer Hector and Patroclus, representing respectively Asia and Europe, both joined in the mourning of Book 24. The word recurrences plainly link poems 65, 68 and 101 and invite us to make a coherent evaluation of the facts contained in each of them: the result of this parallel reading is basically unequivocal.

What is then the cause that made line 8 so attractive in Catullus’ eyes, so that he chose it and not another one in the same book 24? Surely this verse is suited to the situation the poet describes in his poem, since he depicts himself as having just arrived at his brother tomb, after the long journey from his homeland to the Troad. It is also true that line 8 is one of the opening lines of the book, even though it is not one of the first, so that one could assert, in the words of Conte, that this line too has a «high degree of memorability». Nonetheless, it is possible to find other more valid grounds to explain the choice of Catullus.

The entire group of lines 6-9,

Πατρόκλου ποθέων ἀνδροτήτά τε καὶ μένος ἡΰ,
ἦδ’ ὅποσα τολύπευσε σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ πάθεν ἄλγεα
ἀνδρῶν τε πτολέμους ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων
τῶν μμνησκόμενος θαλερὸν κατὰ δάκρυον εἶβεν,

was marked with an *obelos* by Aristarch, in agreement with his predecessor Aristophanes, as we are told by the scholia²⁰. It is worth remembering that the athetesis generally did not cause the actual removing of the passage rejected, which remained in its place, with the critical sign indicating the opinion of the scholar. Furthermore, the Homeric text, which Catullus was very likely to have used, was substantially the same as the text of our medieval transmission, since the number of verses of the vulgata had become stable by the end of the II century BC²¹. Now, without having to go into the problems of the *Homerkritik* and decide whether we agree with Aristarchus condemning the pericope²², one can admit that a group of lines, which was

²⁰ *Schol. A ad loc.* (ed. Erbse): ἀθετοῦνται στίχοι τέσσαρες, ὅτι εὐτελεῖς εἰσίν, ἀρθέντων δὲ αὐτῶν καὶ ἐμφατωκώτερον δηλοῦται ἢ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως λύπη· «ἀλλ’ ἐστρέφετ’ ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα» (Ω 5), «ἄλλοτ’ ἐπὶ πλευράς» (Ω 10). καὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς καταχρᾶται, ἀνδροτήτα, μένος (6)· οὐδὲν γὰρ διαφέρει. καὶ οὐδέποτε ἀνδροτήτα (6) εἶρηκε τὴν ἀνδρείαν, ἀλλ’ ἠγορέαν, ἔχει δὲ καὶ τι δυσεξέλκτον, τῶν μμνησκόμενος (9)· καὶ γὰρ ἄνω εἶρηκεν «ἐτάρου μεμνημένος» (Ω 4). προητετοῦντο δὲ καὶ παρ’ Ἀριστοφάνει. A detailed discussion can be found in W. Leaf, *The Iliad*, II, London 1902, *ad loc.*

²¹ On the history of the Homeric text and the activity of the Alexandrine scholars on it the pages of G. Pasquali, *Storia della tradizione e critica del testo*, Firenze 1952², 201 ff. are still very useful. To this we can add the contribution of M. Haslam, *Homeric Papyri and Transmission of the Text*, in I. Morris-B. Powell (Eds.), *A New Companion to Homer*, Leiden – New York – Köln 1997, 55-100 (with a rich updated bibliography).

²² Most of the scholars either consider the opinion of ancient philologists valueless or agree with it, while emphasizing that the peculiarities of the group of lines 6-9 are consistent with the general character of the whole Book 24: in addition to the already mentioned commentary of Leaf (op. cit. [n. 20], esp. 535 ff.), see above all F. Bechtel, *Die Vocalcontraction bei Homer*, Halle a. S. 1908, 42 f. (who concentrates on the unusual contraction of ἄλγεα, which is always dactylic elsewhere in the poems) and P. Von der Mühl, *Kritisches Hypomnema zur Ilias*, Basel 1952, 371 f.

discussed by the most famous Alexandrine grammarians and hence commented on in their *hypomnemata*, stood out in the eyes of the learned readers of Homer, and so in the eyes of a *poeta doctus* like Catullus and his friends as well²³.

But for a full appreciation of Catullus' allusion we should also consider the special characteristic of the verse ἀνδρῶν τε πολέμους ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων. As already said, it is a repeated line: a 'formula'. The ancient readers and writers were well aware of this quality of the Homeric diction. As stressed by Alessandro Ronconi²⁴, there must have been indeed a close relationship between the formularity and the art of allusion. When the Alexandrine poets wanted to imitate Homer, they did so by choosing above all these repeated lines which were very familiar to everyone, with the aim of reproducing the distinguishing feature of epic diction. The same custom was then borrowed by the Latin poets. A formulaic line like *Iliad* 24.8, which carried a clear stylistic mark and could very easily remain engraved on the mind, must have looked really attractive to a poet who wanted to reuse the Homeric poems.

In support of my recognition it seems possible to add some other considerations, by using once again the ideas Conte expressed on the theme of the 'art of allusion' together with Barchiesi²⁵. In the opinion of both scholars, one of the best examples of a successful allusion of a Latin line to a Greek model is represented by the famous passage of Virgil, *Aeneid* 2.3 (*infandum, regina, iubes renovare dolorem*), which, as is common knowledge, is a 'translation' of *Odyssey* 7.241 f. (ἀργαλέον, βασίλεια, διηγεκέως ἀγορεύσαι | κήδε[α]). Why is this allusion so clear and unquestionable? Because – and I am translating the exact words – of the «coincidence in the situations» between the two passages and above all because of the «correspondence in the order of the initial words and in the metric, rhythmic

²³ The neoteric poets must indeed have been inclined towards textual and interpretative problems, especially Homeric ones, precisely because their Alexandrine models – I particularly have in mind Callimachus for Catullus – had undertaken a philological activity on the Homeric text, either in specialized writing or within their very works of poetry: a wide overview on this topic is offered by A. Rengakos, *Der Homertext und die hellenistische Dichter*, Stuttgart 1993. Moreover, it is well known that precisely the practice of athetesis was the aspect of the Alexandrine scholarship that most astonished the Romans and gave rise to discussion: cf. W.G. Rutherford, *A Chapter in the History of Annotation*, London 1995, 440 n. 2 for evidence. More generally, on the use of Homeric commentaries by Latin poets, see R.R. Schlunk, *The Homeric Scholia and the Aeneid*, Ann Arbor 1974.

²⁴ *Antiche traduzioni latine da Omero*, now in *Filologia e linguistica*, Roma 1968, 109 ff.: «Ritengo che l'arte allusiva abbia la sua giustificazione storica nello stile formulare dell'epos greco: i tardi imitatori alessandrini di Omero che, come Callimaco o Arato, ne hanno ripreso emistichi e clausole ricorrenti che tutti avevano nell'orecchio, hanno voluto con questo riprodurre letterariamente una caratteristica che aveva le sue radici nella poesia orale. L'intento allusivo è generalmente garantito da un legame di parechesi tra modello e imitazione, cioè da una corrispondente posizione delle stesse parole nel verso. Di qui al processo combinatorio che già presso i poeti alessandrini accostava formule tolte da luoghi diversi di uno stesso poeta (prima di tutti Omero), e poi anche di poeti diversi, dov'essere breve il cammino, facilitato certo dall'intervento della scuola...» (p. 110).

²⁵ Op. cit. (n. 5), pp. 106 ff.

and verbal scheme»; last but not least, because that Odyssean line is «quotable and exemplary»; and if Virgil slightly changing his model added «a voluntary hint of pathos», the possibility of recognizing of the allusion is in any case guaranteed, because it «respected the form of the Greek model». Now, one could easily verify that the allusion of Catullus' poem 101.1 (*Multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus*) to *Iliad* 24.8 (ἀνδρῶν τε πολέμους ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων) fits this criteria even more punctually than Virgil's: the coincidence of the contents of poem 101 and Book 24 of the *Iliad* can be easily acknowledged; a verbal correspondence, if not in the order of the initial words, is in the sequence 'men'-'seas' and in (*aequora*) *vectus* at the end of the line like (κύματα) πείρων: the rhythm of the metrical pattern is maintained as far as possible, particularly because to one Homeric hexameter corresponds a Catullan one; the intensification of pathos is tangible in the expressive repetition of the two *multa(s)*, which slightly modify the Greek model without altering its outlines. Lastly, if *Odyssey* 7.241 f. is 'citable and exemplary', the same could be said a fortiori of *Iliad* 24.8. This is very citable line, since it is a 'formula' and hence a major stylistic element of ancient poetry, it belongs to the opening of one of the most famous and moving books of the *Iliad* and hence participates to some extent in «the prominence given by the initial position», and moreover, it had attracted the attention of the Alexandrine philologists.

I would now like to consider the way in which Catullus went about adopting *Iliad* 24.8. The first necessity for the poet was to accurately reproduce the rhythmical structure of the model – an unavoidable requisite to make the allusion recognizable and possibly unambiguous –, obviously by preserving the main pause of the hexameter (in this case the penthemimeral). Above all, it was important for him to respect a delicate position as the end of the line: it is indeed not by chance that we have a perfect correspondence between *vectus* and πείρων and also between *aequora* and κύματα. The placing of the two *per* in the same position as the two τε is also easy to notice: they have the same vowel, lengthened by the position in the first case, short in an open syllable in the second²⁶. Therefore all that is left is to try and explain why Catullus decided to substitute πολέμους and ἀλεγεινά with the two *multa(s)*. First of all, we notice that the poet was forced to modify the expressions 'wars of men' and 'painful waves' to make them suitable for the context of his own poem. Since war was an unfitting element for it, he felt obliged to avoid πολέμους. On the other hand, the motivation that led him to the decision to eliminate ἀλεγεινά seems more awkward to me. The waves of the seas he had sailed through travelling towards the Troad might indeed be defined 'painful, troublesome' without any great contradiction²⁷; nonetheless, the poet decided to eliminate this detail as well. He took this decision, possibly because, as already stated, he wanted all the tension of the poem to be focused on the very moment of the encounter with the dead brother and thus Catullus tried to avoid the risk that any reference to his journey might move the focus elsewhere. The only detail which he might place emphasis on was that of its long

²⁶ Recalling the «legame di parechesi tra modello e imitazione» stressed by Ronconi (see above, n. 24) is particularly useful at this point.

²⁷ Moreover, Catullus had this hemistich ready to use as a model: *tot per inpotentia freta* (*Carmina* 4.18), which is quite similar to the Homeric one ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα.

duration ('many people' and 'many seas'), not only because that journey had actually been long, but even more because in this way the stress fell on the anxiety of the traveller: every mile must have seemed endless to him! This fact is confirmed again by the anaphora of *multa(s)*²⁸ and by the prosodic sequence of seven long syllables (*multas per gentes et mul-*)²⁹.

We cannot, however, avoid asking why the Latin poet chose to use the two *multa(s)*. On the one hand, if we read the Homeric text attentively, we realize that a sense of multiplicity is not absent from *Iliad* 24.8, inasmuch as it is expressed within the rejected group of lines 6-9 by ὀπόσα in line 7. On the other hand, the presence of the anaphora *multas ... multa ...* seems really to link the Latin line to the opening of the *Odyssey*, where we find the repetition πολλά ... πολλῶν ... πολλά, as Conte first subtly realized. It is then reasonable to hypothesize that Catullus combined *Iliad* 24.8 with *Odyssey* 1.1 ff., in accordance with a 'mixing' principle similar to that proposed by Ronconi and legitimately postulated by Landolfi in his analysis (see above). This is fully plausible since the formulaic line ἀνδρῶν τε πολέμους ἄλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων is intimately connected with the words of the opening of the *Odyssey*. It is an 'Odyssean' line, as already underlined and refers appropriately to Odysseus, the hero of the νόστος *par excellence*, in *Odyssey* 8.183, 13.91 and 13.264. It is therefore striking that in *Iliad* 24.8 it refers to Achilles. Moreover, it is always accompanied by a noteworthy phraseology: in *Iliad* 24.7 πάθεν ἄλγεα; in *Odyssey* 8.187 and 189 πολλά ἔτλην and κακὰ πολλά παθών; in *Odyssey* 13.90 μάλα πολλά παθ' ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν; in *Odyssey* 13.263 πάθον ἄλγεα θυμῷ. In every case the same ideas with the same wording are expressed as those in the proem of the *Odyssey*: this link is really too evident to have escaped the attention of the ancients. It seems then probable that Catullus, noticing that ἀνδρῶν τε πολέμους ἄλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων was a sort of combination of the hemistichs πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων (*Odyssey* 1.2) and πολλά ... ἐν πόντῳ ... ἄλγεα (*Odyssey* 1.3), decided, in coherence with his Alexandrine spirit, to substitute πολέμους and ἄλεγεινά of *Iliad* 24.8 with the two *multa(s)* of the opening of the *Odyssey* and to insert them in the frame ... *per ... per aequora vectus* that he was building on the model of ... τε ... τε κύματα πείρων (*Iliad* 24.8).

²⁸ As anybody knows, the purpose of rhetorical figures of repetition such as the anaphora is to intensify the expressive force of the sentence which they belong to: cf. R. Volkmann, *Die Rhetorik der Griechen und Römern*, Leipzig 1885, 467 ff.; C. Blasberg in G. Ueding (Hrsg.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, I, Tübingen 1992, 542 ff., s.v. 'Anapher'; more specifically on Catullus, A. Ronconi, *Scritti catulliani*, Bresca 1971, 39 ff. Indeed, the repetition of *multa(s)* in poem 101 has a clear intensifying value, which is not in the Homeric model: there the 'wars of men' and the 'painful waves' represent two different moments of an adventure that splits into various deeds; here in Catullus the 'many people' and 'many seas' are two aspects of the same endless journey, whose different stages come together to form an aggregate precisely because of the anaphora, which bounds them.

²⁹ The use of a sequence of long syllables is a well known device of Latin poetry to give importance to a line and thus emphasize the semantic content of the sentence (in this case the long duration of the voyage): cf. J. Marouzeau, *Traité de stylistique latine*, Paris 1946², 84. To this we can add that the line *multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus* shows a clear overload of sounds in the sequence of consonants and vowels, as it was stressed by N.I. Herescu, *La poésie latine. Études des structures phoniques*, Paris 1960, 120 f.

Before I conclude, we should take into account the position of Virgil in the ‘triangle’ with Homer and Catullus. As clearly stressed by Conte (see above), it is more than certain that Virgil in *Aeneid* 6.692 (*quas ego te terras et quanta per aequora vectum*) cites poem 101.1. Had he perhaps failed to recognize the model of *Iliad* 24.8 in Catullus’ line? If an accomplished poet like Virgil, who knew the Homeric poems by heart, had not been successful in recognizing the allusion, my whole analysis would be invalidated. But this is not the case, since we have a clear sign that Virgil actually took advantage of Catullus’ ‘offer’. Indeed he inserted an explicit indication between his lines to show his readers that he had understood Catullus’ allusion to *Iliad* 24.8. Whereas Catullus had reused line 8, he decided to imitate him by ‘translating’ line 9 of the same Iliadic book:

τῶν μμνησκόμενος θαλερὸν κατὰ δάκρυα εἶβεν.

He does so in the same Book 6 of his poem, at the end of the first dialogue between the dead Anchises and his son Aeneas, some lines later than line 692, in line 699:

sic memorans largo fletu simul ora rigabat.

This hexameter is a clear translation of *Iliad* 24.9³⁰, that is, of the last line of the rejected group of lines 6-9, which we have already discussed. This is confirmed by the fact that no other hexameter exists in the Homeric poems with the same structure³¹, nor we can find parallels within the *Aeneid* itself³². *Sic* express the sense of the pronoun τῶν appropriately; *memorans* reproduces μμνησκόμενος to the letter, even if the sense is somewhat different³³; *largo fletu* corresponds to θαλερὸν δάκρυον; *rigabat* matches κατεῖβεν, but is more expressive³⁴ and reinforced by *simul* and *ora*, which are not in the model, in line with the

³⁰ This new citation should be added to the *Listen der Homerzitate in der Aeneis* that we find in G.N. Knauer, *Die Aeneis und Homer*, Göttingen 1979².

³¹ I could find only two other parallels, which are however in the same Book 24 of the *Iliad*: ἦ δ' ἄρα σίτου μνήσατ', ἐπεὶ κάμε δάκρυ χέουσα (v. 613) and μεμνήμην νύκτας τε καὶ ἥματα δάκρυ χέουσα (v. 745). These lines are in any case not very compelling. As for τῶν μμνησκόμενος we find once again only one parallel in the same Iliadic book: τῶν μμνησκόμεναι (v. 167).

³² The line appears again only in *Aeneid* 9.250 f., but ‘reduced’ and ‘dismantled’: *sic memorans umeros dextrasque tenebat | amborum et voltum lacrimis atque ora rigabat*.

³³ The meaning of *memorans* is indeed *dicens*, as usual (cf. *OLD*, s.v. and H. Merguet, *Lexicon zu Vergilius*, Leipzig 1912, s.v.).

³⁴ κατεῖβεν could have been rendered appropriately with *effundo* or *perfunto*: in the *Aeneid* we indeed find phrases like *effundere fletus* (2.271), *effusus lacrimis* (2.651), *effusae genis lacrimae* (6.686), *lacrimis effundit inanis* (10.465), *lacrimis flagrantis perfusa genas* (12.65). These expressions were surely common, whereas the choice of the verb *rigo*, in the line we are dealing with, has no other reason, I think, than the determination of the author to intensify the expressive force of the Homeric model. *Rigo* is indeed used in very different contexts and refers to the flowing of a river through the field (*Aeneid* 7.738) or that of blood from a wound (*Aeneid* 11.698 and 12.308): cf. Merguet, op. cit. (n. 33), s.v.

principles of the ancient theory of translating from Greek into Latin (*vertere*). Virgil is conversing with Catullus in this passage and makes the reader aware of it. What is more, the fact that Virgil was able to create a couplet (*Aeneid* 6.692 f.) with an Odyssean character, which clearly relates to the opening lines of his own poem and hence to those of the *Odyssey*, by reusing line 1 of Catullus' poem 101 with such ease, can be explained without difficulty: as we saw earlier, the line *multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus* is indeed genetically connected with the opening of the *Odyssey* because of his model *Iliad* 24.8.

I would like to conclude by summing up the main points of my analysis. Catullus had suggested to the reader the logical association of the death of his brother with the mournful fate of the Iliadic heroes: this is only hinted at in poem 65, but becomes so explicit in poem 68 that it cannot be doubted. He also wanted the memory of the Homeric Troy to appear in the very piece he dedicated to celebrating his brother and taking leave of him: poem 101. In order to be concise and intense in his 'epigrammatic' elegy, he decided though not to give another explicit reference to the *Iliad*, but allows the reader just to catch a glimpse of it: the subtle poetic technique of Callimachean origin came in aid of the poet. The Homeric model could not force its way into the lines of the poem, but it must have reechoed, albeit with the mighty voice of the most ancient and noble tradition: this is, I do believe, the reason for the use of the technique of allusion. Nor could the echo of the *Iliad* sound warlike, but it must have evoked an aura of peace and piety: the peace and piety that Book 24 shows above all³⁵. The reference became more and more precise in Catullus' mind. When he represented himself as honouring his brother with funeral rites on the shore of the Troad, he could not but remember the episode of the funeral of Hector and of the desperate lament of Achilles for Patroclus: this is the reason for the allusion to Book 24 of the *Iliad*. But why precisely line 8 then? Because this line offered itself, so to say, spontaneously to be involved in the process of the 'art of allusion' as a consequence of its characteristics: above all, I suppose, its formulaic nature. Line 8 became thus the 'motto' of poem 101. Subsequently, it was soon recognized by the ancient readers of Catullus: Virgil left clear evidence to us in *Aeneid* 6.692 ff. He alluded in line 692 to Catullus' *multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus*, undoubtedly with the intention of evoking poem 101. This line, however, also offered him the possibility – I would say the obligation – of an astute reply, since it concealed the Homeric model of *Iliad* 24.8. So then, after the conversation between Anchises and Aeneas (vv. 687-698), Virgil inserted his 'translation' of *Iliad* 24.9.

³⁵ This aspect is well stressed in the commentary of C.W. MacLeod. *Homer: Iliad Book XXIV*, Cambridge 1982 (especially in the Introduction, pp. 14 f. and *passim*).